

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently amended) A bone fracture fixation device for fixating a fractured bone having first and second bone segments that interface at a bone fracture, comprising:

a support member, wherein the support member includes at least one slot extending through the side of the support member;

first and second support shafts extending through the at least one slot of the support member, the at least one slot and the support shafts being configured and dimensioned to allow movement of the support shafts in a longitudinal direction with respect to the support member, wherein the first and second support shafts are configured to be affixed to the first and the second bone segments, respectively; and

a coupling assembly positioned along the support member, wherein the coupling assembly is configured and arranged to 1) releasably couple the support shafts to the support member at a selectable separation distance; 2) apply a force against the support shafts; and 3) permit controlled movement of the first support shaft with respect to the second support shaft.

17. (Currently amended) The bone fracture fixation device of Claim 16, wherein the force applied against the support shafts is variable.

18. (Currently amended) The bone fracture fixation device of Claim 16, wherein the longitudinal axis of each support shaft is substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the support member.

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19. (Currently amended) The bone fracture fixation device of Claim 16, wherein the coupling assembly includes springs to apply force against the support shafts.

20. (Currently amended) The bone fracture fixation device of Claim 16, wherein the coupling assembly includes at least one selectively positionable coupler, the position of the coupler partially determining the magnitude of the applied force against the support shafts.

21. (Currently amended) The bone fracture fixation device of Claim 20, wherein the coupler is a threaded fastener or clamp.

22-27. (Cancelled)

28. (New) A bone fracture fixation device for fixating a fractured bone having first and second bone segments that interface at a bone fracture, comprising:

a support shaft having opposed threaded ends and at least one slot extending through the side of the support shaft;

first and second pins extending through the at least one slot of the support shaft, the at least one slot and the support pins being configured and dimensioned to allow movement of the support pins in a longitudinal direction with respect to the support shaft, wherein the first and second support pins are configured to be affixed to the first and the second bone segments, respectively, on opposite sides of the bone fracture; and

a coupling assembly positioned along the support shaft, the coupling assembly including at least one of a biasing member or spacer operatively coupled to the support shaft between the support pins, the other of the at least one biasing member or spacer disposed over the support shaft between the support pins and the ends of the support shaft, and first and second

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threaded members threadably engaged with the threads of the ends of the support shaft and contacting the other of the at least one biasing member or spacer;

wherein the coupling assembly 1) releasably couples the support pins to the support shaft at a selectable separation distance; 2) applies a force against the support pins; and 3) permits controlled movement of the first support pin with respect to the second support pin.

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